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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD

Written statement* submitted by North South XXI, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[22 December 2000]

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* This written statement is issued, unedited, as received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

GE.01-10392 (E)

The situation in Colombia

1. The United States asserts that it is developing a "Colombia Plan" as an anti-drug measure in the framework of "assistance" to the Colombian authorities amounting to over US$ 7 billion, of which US$ 1.3 billion goes to the military. The official purpose of this Plan is "to consolidate democratic machinery and measures to curb the drug traffic".

2. In reality, however, this action by the United States is designed to combat guerrilla movements which are successfully opposing the Colombian army and paramilitary forces that are systematically violating human rights in the course of their brutal repressive operations. Moreover, its action is motivated not by efforts to curb drug traffickers but by its economic interests in Colombia, namely, biotopes for the pharmaceutical industry, a canal project duplicating the Panama Canal and oil. Indeed, the presence of the Chavez Government in Venezuela increases Colombia's strategic importance to American interests.

3. This United States action is disrupting negotiations between the Colombian Government and the guerrilla forces; it is exacerbating the expropriation and uprooting of small peasant farmers for the sole benefit of large cattle ranchers, industrialists and the mafia; 2 million peasants have already been driven from their land during the past 15 years. The coca plantations which are the source of the livelihood of thousands of peasants can be done away with (if necessary) only by the implementation of a new agricultural policy that promotes a switch to profitable crops.

4. The Commission on Human Rights should condemn the so-called anti-drug plan of the United States whose objectives are radically different and which is nothing more than a new form of habitual United States interference in South America.